

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, CA

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER CITES PRESIDENTIAL ASSURANCES ON
GARRISON DIVERSION

REF: OTTAWA 2153

1. ENVIRONMENT MINISTER MME SAUVE'S OUTSPOKEN
COMMENTS (REFTEL) HAVE CREATED A STIR IN CANADA AND
HAVE FOCUSED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION UPON THE GARRISON
DIVERSION AND ON US ASSURANCES THAT PROJECT WILL NOT
AFFECT CANADA ADVERSELY.

2. CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION PARTY MEMBERS IN PARLIAMENT
HAVE BEEN ENERGETICALLY DEMANDING TO KNOW
WHAT ACTION THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN TO BRING ABOUT A
HALT TO THE PROJECT AND/OR TO GUARANTEE THAT IT WILL NOT AD-
VERSELY AFFECT CANADA.

IN REPLY TO ONE SUCH QUESTION FONMIN MACEACHEN
SAID "THE UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES HAVE GIVEN THE
ASSURANCE THAT NO CONSTRUCTION WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN
THAT WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE WATERS OF
THE SOURIS AND SO ON, IN MANITOBA. THIS PLEDGE HAS

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BEEN GIVEN BY THE US."

3. HOWEVER, THE MINISTER WAS PRESSED FURTHER REGARDING THE NEED TO STOP THE PROJECT. IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT MACEACHEN CITED ALLEGED ASSURANCES GIVEN BY THE PRESIDENT TO PRIME MINISTER ON THIS SUBJECT:

"MR. SPEAKER, WE ARE STILL CONFIDENT THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL HONOUR ITS LONG-STANDING PLEDGE THAT NO CONSTRUCTION WILL BE UNDERTAKEN...UNLESS THE UNITED STATES IS IN A POSITION TO MEET ALL ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE TREATY. THE MATTER WAS RAISED, AS MY HON. FRIEND KNOWS, LAST DECEMBER AT THE MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER AND THAT ASSURANCE WAS REPEATED AT THAT TIME. SO I AM CONFIDENT THAT PLEDGE WILL BE CARRIED OUT."

CONSERVATIVE MP DAN MCKENZIE: "MR. SPEAKER, THE PROBLEM IS THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THIS PROJECT THAT ARE NEARING COMPLETION. WE HAVE ALMOST REACHED THE POINT OF NO RETURN. IF THE PROJECT CONTINUES THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN STOP THE POLLUTION OF MANITOBA WATERS."

4. COMMENT: AS MENTIONED IN REFTTEL, CANADIANS ARE OBVIOUSLY GETTING VERY NERVOUS ABOUT CONTINUED CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY ON THE GARRISON PROJECT. IT IS EMBASSY'S POSSIBLY ERRONEOUS RECOLLECTION THAT ABOUT A YEAR AGO THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION HAD INDICATED IT WOULD COMPLETE THE MCCLUSKEY CANAL BECAUSE SO MANY CONTRACTS HAD ALREADY BEEN LET, BUT THAT NO FURTHER CONTRACTS WOULD BE GIVEN THEREAFTER UNTIL ALL ISSUES HAD BEEN RESOLVED. CANADIAN SOURCES INDICATE THAT BUREC IS NOW GOING AHEAD WITH THE LONE TREE RESERVOIR PART OF THE PROJECT. IF THIS IS TRUE, CANADIAN CONCERN MIGHT HAVE MORE BASIS. IN ANY EVENT, CRITICALITY OF GOC CONCERN OVER PROJECT AND OPPOSITION CRITICISM IS INDICATED BY CITATION OF PRESIDENT'S ASSURANCE TO PM THAT 1909 TREATY OBLIGATIONS WOULD BE RESPECTED. PORTER

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